

Jim Doyle
Governor

Roberta Gassman
Secretary



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
201 East Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 7946
Madison, WI 53707-7946
Telephone: (608) 266-7552
Fax: (608) 266-1784
<http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/>
e-mail: dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us

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Contact: Dick Jones (608) 267-4780

Wisconsin Announces Receipt of \$10.8 Million in Federal Performance Bonus Funds for "Welfare to Work" Program

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Receives Bonus for Achievements in Helping Low Income Working Families

Governor Jim Doyle and Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced the receipt of \$10,860,369 in federal dollars for demonstrated performance in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.

"Wisconsin has always been a leader in employment programs. We are delighted that Wisconsin has been recognized with this bonus so that we can continue providing employment services and other resources to Wisconsin's low-income families," said Governor Doyle. "Finding a job is the first step out of poverty and with these resources, more families will be able to achieve this dream."

The welfare reform legislation of 1996 authorized funding for annual performance achievement bonuses within the TANF program, called the High Performance Bonus. States can choose to compete in any or all of the performance bonus categories, but must supply data to federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in order to be considered for the award.

High Performance Bonuses are awarded for employment achievement among TANF recipient adults -- including job entry, job retention and increased earnings. Bonuses also were awarded for program achievements in helping low-income working families take advantage of available Food Stamps and Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program coverage; in providing child care; and in increasing the proportion of children living in married couple families. Most of these awards are made for relative performance in the given year and for greatest improvement from the previous year.

Award amounts for each state depend upon the size of each state's TANF block grant. Under the law, states are limited to receiving bonuses in a given year of no more than five percent of their annual TANF block grant.

In addition to administering the state's W-2 program, DWD provides training and employment assistance to people looking for work; works with employers to fill job openings; helps the disabled secure employment; links youth with jobs; protects and enforces worker's rights; administers Wisconsin's apprenticeship program; pays Unemployment Insurance claims; and, administers Workers Compensation.

Said Secretary Gassman, "We are especially pleased to receive this funding during such tight fiscal times. This is a great opportunity to increase our capacity to meet the needs of Wisconsin's children and families."

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